

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20 IO-13 DPW-01 EUR-25 NIC-01

RSR-01 /128 W

----- 129738

O R 051100 Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4149

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG IMMEDIATE

USDEL JEC PARIS

USDAO SAIGON

USSAG NKP RTAFB

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 12071

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MILI, PINT, VS, VN

SUBJECT: COMMUNISTS THREATEN RETALIATION AGAINST GVN " REAR
BASES"

REF: A. FBIS SAIGON S041235 JULY 73

B. SAIGON 11998/041155 Z JULY 73

SUMMARY: THE COMMUNISTS HAVE REACTED ANGRILY TO INTENSIFIED
RVNAF ACTIVITIES IN KONTUM PROVINCE, WHICH CULMINATED IN THE
JULY 2 BOMBING OF THE PHUNG HOANG II (DAK TO) AIRSTRIP BY VNAF.
THE TREAT TO " STRIKE DIRECTLY" AT GVN " REAR BASES" SEEMS TO
RELATE TO RVNAF ACTIVITIES " DEEP IN THE LIBERATED ZONE" SUCH AS
THE DAK TO AIRSTRIKE, RATHER THAN TO THE ONGOING BATTLES FOR
TRUNG NGHIA AND OTHER VILLAGES IN THE KONTUM VICINITY. END SUMMARY.

1. LIBERATION RADION BROADCAST A JULY 4 STATEMENT OF THE KONTUM
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PROVINCE PLAF COMMEND (REF A) CONDEMNING RVNAF ACTIVITIES IN THE PROVINCE SINE JUNE 15. MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY WERE THE INTENSE ATTACKS MOUNTED BY GVN FORCES TO RETAKE AREAS NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST OF THE PROVINCE CAPITAL, THE ULTIMATUM DELIVERED BY GENERAL CAM, COMMANDER OF ARVN' S 23 RD DIVISION, DEMANDING THAT COMMUNIST FORCES WITHDRAW FROM THE TRUNG NGHIA AREA BEFORE JUNE 28 OR SUFFER STRONG RVNAF ACTION, AND THE JULY 2 VNAF BOMBING OF THE PHUNG HOANG II (DAK TO) AIRSTRIP.

2. SHOULD SUCH ACTIVITIES CONTINUE, THE STATEMENT WARNS, THE PLAF WILL NOT ONLY TAKE " ON- THE- SPOT COUNTERACTIONS, BUT MAY ALSO STRIKE DIRECTLY AT ITS (I. E. THE GVN' S) " REAR BASES." IF THIS WERE NOT CLEAR ENOUGH WARNING, THE STATEMENT REITERATES THE THREAT: " WE WILL NOT ONLY COUNTERATTACK THE SAIGON ADMINISTRATION WHEREEVER IT ATTACKS US, BUT MAY ALSO ATTACK IT ELSEWHERE." THE PLAF MESSAGE CONCLUDES WITH AN OFFER TO DISCUSS MEASURES TO AVOID FURTHER CONFLICT WITH " SAIGON FORCES COMMAND ECHELONS."

3. (COMMENT) BOTH SIDES ARE NOW ON THE PUBLIC RECORD WITH THEIR INTENTIONS TO HOLD (THE VC) OR TO RETAKE (THE GVN) AREAS WHICH FELL INTO COMMUNIST HANDS SHORTLY BEFORE CEASE- FIRE II THUS MAKING IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR EITHER TO BACK DOWN WITHOUT A SERIOUS LOSS OF FACE. THE PLAF STATEMENT IS APPARENTLY THE " HIGHLY AGITATED LETTER" WHICH GENERAL CAM TOLD KONTUM POLOFF HE HAD RECEIVED FROM THE PRG (REF B, PART V, PARA 4). CAM SEEMED NOT TO TAKE TERRIBLY SERIOUSLY THE COMMUNISTS' THREAT TO TAKE " APPROPRIATE ACTION" IN RESPONSE TO THE DAK TO BOMBING BUT SELDOM HAVE WE SEEN SUCH A PUBLIC AND EXPLICIT THREAT UTTERED BY THE VIET CONG. IT IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHAT KINDS OR LEVELS OF ACTIVITY WOULD TRIGGER COUNTERACTIONS AGAINST GVN " REAR BASES." BUT THE OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH IN THIS CONTEXT SEEMS TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN " NIBBLING ATTACKS" (I. E. TRUNG NGHIA, POLEI KONG ETC .) AND " SHELLING, BOMBING, COMMANDO AND SABOTAGE" OPERATIONS AGAINST AREAS DEEP IN THE " LIBERATED ZONE" (E. G. DAK TO). THE THREAT TO ATTACK GVN REAR BASES SEEMS TO APPLY TO THE LATTER, BUT NOT NECESSARILY TO THE FORMER CONTINGENCY. (END COMMENT.)

WHITEHOUSE

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